

Police

Duxbury Clipper

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A Brief History of the Duxbury Police:

(The following article by the late Jack Post is reprinted from the Duxbury Book, published by the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society in 1987)

Before the 20th century, Duxbury had no official police department, and even in the early 1900's, the selectmen made their own chairman chief of police, with several elected constables. Two constables, Charles Pierce and Andrew Delano, followed later by Joseph Bolton and Warren Prince, occasionally overlapped each other's terms of office, but in general, managed to accomplish the necessary work. Special officers handled criminal matters, but constables were elected to handle civil warrants.

Things began to change

when James O'Neil was appointed constable in 1925. In 1931, he became Duxbury's one man police force. A police station was built in part of the old South Duxbury school, and funds were appropriated for a motor cycle and a cruiser. O'Neil became permanent chief, with temporary officers on call when needed. During 1931, the force answered 256 calls resulting in 19 arrests.

After 1931, with the appointment of Earl Chandler as first full time patrolman, the department settled into a long period of gradual expansion. Chandler became chief and was succeeded by Lawrence Doyle.

Henry McNeil, chief since 1946, was a prime mover in the expansion and modernization

of the department. After 37 years of service, he was succeeded by Daniel L. Skelly, who resigned in 1986 to become Chief of the Capitol Police in Boston. The selectmen then appointed Enrico Cappucci, former chief of Shirley to the post.

In 1967, the department moved into its own building that included a lock up, radio systems, and offices to handle a workload of over 15,000 calls a year. With a total force of 26 full time officers.

(Clipper Editor's Note: The town established an E-911 emergency dispatch center based in the police department in April, 1996. Chief Enrico Cappucci retired from the force in August of 1996 to head up the Boston University campus police. He was succeeded by former Maryland state police official Charles Mazzone in 1997. Mazzone resigned due to health related reasons in December 1998. Mark DeLuca was sworn in as new police chief Monday night.)